

Message Text

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51

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ADP-00 EURE-00 INRE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00

USIE-00 COA-02 EB-11 COME-00 INT-08 AGR-20 OMB-01

TRSE-00 SAJ-01 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 RSR-01 /136 W

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3066

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

USMISSION OECD PARIS

USMISSION GENEVA

SECDEF

SECDEF

CINCLANT

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 08891

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR, IC, UK

SUBJECT: FISHERIES DISPUTE: NO HALT IN BRITISH FISHING

REF: REYKJAVIK 898

WITHOUT MENTIONING REFTEL WE DISCUSSED WITH FCO OFFICIAL
STATE OF PLAY IN DISPUTE AS SEEN FROM HERE AND ELICITED
FOLLOWING INFORMATION: BEFORE FISHING YEAR ENDS AUGUST
31, BRITISH TRAWLERS WILL NOT (REPEAT NOT) REACH 170,000
TON LIMIT SET BY ICJ. FISHING YEAR IN QUESTION IS FROM
SEPTEMBER 1, 1972, DATE ON WHICH COURT HANDED DOWN ITS
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INTERIM DECISION WHICH SET THE LIMIT, TO AUGUST 31, 1973.

TRAWLERS WILL STAY IN ICELANDIC FISHING AREAS THROUGH
END OF CURRENT FISHING YEAR AND WILL CONTINUE TO FISH
WITHOUT BREAK INTO NEXT FISHING YEAR. THEY WILL CONTINUE
TO HAVE PROTECTION OF BRITISH FRIGATES. FCO ANNOUNCED
SHORT TIME AGO THAT EXPECTED CATCH IN CURRENT YEAR WOULD
BE BETWEEN 155,000 AND 165,000 TONS. ICJ IN A RECENT
RENEWAL OF ITS DECISION AGAIN SET LIMIT AT 170,000 TONS
AND BRITISH TRAWLERS WILL CONTINUE TO BE BOUND BY THIS
FIGURE.

BRITISH POSITION ON NEGOTIATIONS IS CONTAINED IN THE
WHITE PAPER OF MAY 4 WHICH PRESENTS COUNTER-PROPOSALS
THAT ARE STILL ON TABLE AS FAR AS HMG IS CONCERNED. NO
RESPONSE HAS BEEN RECEIVED FROM ICELAND, BUT BRITISH ARE
READY TO RESUME NEGOTIATIONS AT ANY TIME ON BASIS OF
COUNTER-PROPOSALS. ICELAND HAS CLEARLY STATED THAT
THERE WILL BE NO NEGOTIATIONS WHILE BRITISH FISHERIES
PROTECTION VESSELS ARE WITHIN 50-MILE LIMIT, AND THUS
DEADLOCK CONTINUES.

FINANCIAL TIMES REPORTED TODAY THAT TOTAL FISH CATCH IN
ICELANDIC WATERS IS ESTIMATED BY FISHING INDUSTRY TO BE
ABOUT 160,000 TONS FOR CURRENT YEAR. INDUSTRY SAID TO BE
SATISFIED SINCE, ALTHOUGH CATCH LOWER THAN LAST YEAR'S
184,000 TONS, SHORTFALL OFFSET BY HIGHER PRICES. INDUS-
TRY CREDITS PROTECTION AFFORDED BY NAVY AS RESPONSIBLE
FOR SATISFACTORY CATCH. FT REPORTER WRITES FEELING IN
INDUSTRY IS THAT DISPUTE WILL GO TO LAW OF THE SEA
CONFERENCE. BRITISH FISHING INTERESTS SAID TO BE
RECONCILED TO EXTENSION OF ICELAND'S FISHING LIMITS, BUT
HOPE IS FOR NEGOTIATED PHASE-OUT. INDUSTRY MEANTIME
LOOKING TO OTHER AREAS AND BARENTS SEA APPEARS OFFER
PROSPECTS FOR NEXT SEASON.

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